

## 6.0 CONCLUSIONS

The Proposed Action (Alternative I, the preferred alternative), Implement the Land Use Plan for Fort Detrick, Maryland, is the option that best suits the needs of the DA. Alternative I would have no significant adverse environmental impacts and would result in negligible risks to health of the public and workforce. Implementing Alternative I would provide Fort Detrick with much-needed infrastructural upgrades and is consistent with planning objectives of Fort Detrick. The other alternative examined in the EA, (No Action), does not adequately address these considerations for USAG. Benefits of the Proposed Action far outweigh the negligible risks.

The most severe potential effects associated with the Proposed Action are anticipated to be negligible to minor. Detailed analyses of the individual activities and impacts of the Proposed Action, as well as the actual cumulative impacts of other entities in the immediate vicinity of Fort Detrick, did not reveal any significant adverse environmental impacts. Therefore, individual and cumulative impacts of the Proposed Action would be minor.

During the preparation of this EA, several potential environmental issues associated with implementation of the preferred alternative were identified.

Possible negligible to minor adverse impacts associated with construction include:

- potential minor impacts to soils;
- negligible impacts to water resources;
- minor impacts to wetlands;
- minor impacts to plants and animals;
- minor impacts to air quality;
- minor impacts to historical and cultural resources due to fugitive dust during construction;
- positive impacts to the local socioeconomic environment (the City of Frederick);
- minor impacts from noise;
- negligible impacts from odors;
- potential minor impacts to traffic off-post from construction vehicles;
- minor impacts to energy resources;
- negligible impacts to waste streams; and
- negligible impacts to human health and safety.

Possible negligible to minor adverse impacts, and positive impacts associated with operation include:

- minor adverse impacts (loss of agricultural land) and positive impacts (consolidation of similar activities on the Installation, gain of forested land, and increased wetlands) to land use;
- negligible impacts to soils;
- positive impacts to wetlands;
- positive impacts to plant and animal ecology (creation of high quality habitat);
- negligible impacts to air quality;
- positive impacts to historical and cultural resources (protective tree buffers, interpretive trails);
- positive impacts to the Fort Detrick socioeconomic environment (residents of Fort Detrick);

- positive impacts to housing on Fort Detrick;
- negligible impacts from noise;
- negligible impacts from odors;
- positive impacts to traffic from gate reconfigurations and roadway expansions;
- positive impacts to security;
- negligible impacts to energy resources;
- negligible impacts to waste streams;
- possible minor impacts to nearby residents from nuisance lighting (ball fields and running track); and
- negligible impacts to human health and safety.

All of the potential adverse impacts resulting from the implementation of the Proposed Action were deemed to be negligible to minor and mitigatable, provided that BMPs are strictly adhered to during construction/demolition and operation of the proposed facilities.

The principal conclusions of this EA are: (1) implementing Alternative I (the preferred alternative) would result in no significant adverse environmental impacts, provided that BMPs to mitigate these potential environmental impacts are adhered to during construction/demolition and operation of the facilities; (2) implementing the Proposed Action will provide Fort Detrick with much-needed infrastructural improvements which will increase efficiency and allow USAG and its tenants to achieve their respective mission requirements; (3) implementing the Land Use Plan for Fort Detrick (the Proposed Action) will increase recreational opportunities and security for the workforce and residents of Fort Detrick; (4) implementing Alternative I will expand and enhance the natural resources areas of the Installation; (5) implementing Alternative I is consistent with the land use planning objectives for Fort Detrick; (6) implementing Alternative II (No Action) would not provide Fort Detrick with much-needed infrastructural facilities and would hamper the ability of USAG and its tenants to meet their respective mission requirements; (7) implementing Alternative II (No Action) is not consistent with land use planning objectives for Fort Detrick; and (8) implementing the No Action alternative would eliminate the negligible to minor environmental impacts associated with the implementation of Alternative I, but would also eliminate the beneficial impacts of the Proposed Action.